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ABSTRACT

The article discusses the Learning Center and its peer tutorial program at Bainbridge College (Georgia). With diverse roles and obligations overarching students' college experience, fostering leadership and building campus involvement in student organizations is a challenge. Some of the challenges for the Bainbridge Learning Center and its peer tutorial program include recruiting, training and retaining tutors of quality, and creating opportunities for personal growth toward leadership. In the first two years of the program, nominations for tutors came only from professors. Now, tutors are asked to recommend from among their classmates or even clients. Between the selection time and the tutor training workshop, new tutors must watch the first four of a series of ten tutoring videos and do required paperwork for the business office. Tutors are expected to be active learners in their classes and in the subject they are tutoring, to be models of effective students habits, and to be managers of their time. Formal training begins with the first training session of the semester. Too often, client files are not as complete as they need to be for an in-depth evaluation of tutoring practices and outcomes. Therefore, end-of-the-term summaries were developed to serve as the collecting tool for assessing the numbers served and to record grades earned. (JA)

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ED 452 889

Building Leadership and Academic Success Through Tutoring Programs

Gabriele U. Stauf

The most consistent and difficult challenge in a commuter educational setting is that of developing a sense of belonging and community among the students. That challenge comes not only because students do not perceive themselves to have the time to become involved with other students or campus activities, but also because most commuters come into the educational setting with divergent goals and assumptions.

At Bainbridge College four populations of students can be identified: traditional students, under-prepared students with GED's, non-traditional students who may also be under-prepared by virtue of many years' interruption between high school graduation and college entrance, and non-traditional students who are full-time employees and who want to earn certificates or degrees to improve job opportunities or change careers. These categories, of course, are not distinct. Many students may be cohorts in two or more categories. One perspective that they all seem to hold in common, however, is that they do not see their studies as a life-changing event. They do not envision that the taking of a few courses will develop a new perspective, group of friends, or life-involvement. Many, even traditional college students, come already settled into a way of life. While that way of life may need a better paying job to become more comfortable and satisfying, students do not envision campus life as being a part of the process that will eventually provide that job. They see their class work or their program of study as the only component of their college experience. In their view, only the resulting certification will provide the ticket to an improved life situation. Often, even "traditional college bound" students are already employees, parents, and spouses. Such roles exert an influence toward family and community rather than campus involvement.

With such roles and obligations overarching students' college experience, fostering leadership and building campus involvement in student organizations is a challenge. One organization and/or program particularly challenged is the Learning Center and its peer tutorial program. The most significant challenges include **recruiting, training and retaining tutors of quality,** and **creating opportunities for personal growth toward leadership** so that the tutorial Center can become an active and attractive presence on campus.

This article concerns itself with the challenges of putting such a Center together, maintaining a high level of professionalism, and offering opportunities for growth. Some components essential to student involvement and program continuity include:

- recruiting and inducting into a corps through applications, interviews, and peer mentoring;
- facing the challenges of training and achieving a standard of performance through developing accountability and professional behaviors;
- creating opportunities for leadership development, observing traditions that build community, and mentoring.

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I.
Recruiting and Inducting into the Tutor Corps

Recruiting

- In the first two years of the program, nominations came only from professors.
- Now, tutors are asked to recommend from among their classmates or even clients.
- Additionally, students may self-nominate.

All must submit an application, present themselves for an interview, undergo the required pre-screening tests, and view introductory video programs about tutoring.

This application process developed as I made several discoveries regarding tutor recruitment during the past three years:

- **Professors** do not always feel free to nominate a student until the very end of the semester. For the time line that I must observe, I cannot wait until the semester is over.
- **Tutors** have greater acumen than we might assume in identifying prospective tutors; they assess one another's strengths and skills in choosing study partners.
- **Student** nomination can be effective since students may have more aspiration and ability to tutor than a professor may recognize.

Recruiting time line

FOUR weeks before the end of the semester: Letter to faculty and posters out on the campus. Letters (phone calls if time is of the essence) go out to those students nominated by faculty or by tutors.

Applications are due **TWO** weeks before the end of the semester. The applications were developed with the input of tutors working in the Learning Center in the first few quarters. Upon submission of the application, the tutor is given an interview appointment and some questions to think about in preparation for the interview.

ONE week before the end of the semester, candidates interview with the Directors and STAR tutors. STAR tutors are permitted to ask questions and have decision-making input on the selection process. The questions on the interview sheet were also compiled with the help of former tutors.

Selection and announcement are made during **FINAL EXAMS** week.
At that time, candidates will be given the date of the required training workshop.

Inducting

Between the selection time and the Tutor Training Workshop, new tutors must

- watch the first four of a series-of-ten tutoring **videos**.
- do required paperwork for the business office.
- meet with TUTOR-**MENTORS** who will teach timesheet management and learning Center culture, record-keeping tasks necessary for tracking clients and for the effective functioning of the Learning Center.

II.
Training and Retaining Tutors-Leaders of Quality

Setting and Maintaining Standards of Performance Tutor-Leaders

Tutors are expected to **be learners** in their classes and in the subject they are tutoring;

to be **models of effective student habits,**

to be **managers of their time;**

to be **dependable;**

to be **willing to face problems** and **accept the challenge of finding a solution** either alone, if they choose, or with a mentor;

to **view their appointment as a job** and act toward it appropriately; and,

to **represent themselves as leaders** of the learning community and the campus.

Formal Training . . .

begins with the first training session of the semester, which is always a six-hour session. It may be held on two consecutive days or on one day with lunch as a part of the training workshop. Training continues throughout the semester in weekly, mandatory tutor meetings and through a tutor's self-paced video instruction of the remaining videos of the *Tutor Training Guide*.* (see bibliography for information)

Informal Training . . .

begins with the application process and continues in the form of mentoring throughout the term. It takes place with every interaction that the Director or her assistant has with tutors. We believe that the most significant training comes from our high expectations and positive attitude and finally, our ability to be open to tutors' suggestions for goals, improvements, self-evaluation, bulletin board creations, and student and faculty interactions.

Challenges of Training for Quality Performance

- Finding a **common time** at which every tutor can meet consistently and the adequate number of hours for effective training;
- Impressing on tutors the **importance of learning, expanding previous learning,** and **cultivating tutoring skills**; and
- Teaching that Learning Center management and record keeping are as important as practicing appropriate tutoring techniques.

Common Time for . . .

The six-hour Tutor Training Workshop always takes place the week before the semester begins. This time frame accomplishes two ends: tutors need not work around classes to be attended, and we can begin the process of distinguishing the serious from the casual tutor. Those tutors who do not come to the training session are not eligible to

tutor for pay. They may choose to tutor as a volunteer making them first in line the next semester, but their current status is strictly volunteer. A tutor may call and explain his/her reason for needing to miss the workshop; however, that tutor must undergo training with a TUTOR-MENTOR before being placed on the for-pay list. Such an exception is made ONLY for returning tutors who have already participated in one Tutor Training Workshop. Still, such a miss does not occur without being challenged, as experienced tutors are an invaluable resource in training newcomers. In fact, experienced tutors are given their own "program" during the workshop. Their contributions are an important component of continuity and "wisdom sharing" as they pass on experiences and truth gathered in the "field."

The Weekly Tutor Meeting presents a challenge because students have such varied schedules. Of course the group can be divided into subgroups, and tutors may attend one of two scheduled times. While such a scheme assures that all tutors attend a meeting, it undermines the cohesiveness of the group. One intended outcome of regular meetings is the gradual development of cohesiveness among the tutors, so that they work with one another and for the success of the program. In an attempt to assure that all tutors get the same information, a *meeting agenda is developed and published for each meeting*. Still, if the group is split, each sub-group develops its own personality and an identifiable corps persona and cohesiveness is sacrificed.

The Ideal

A tutoring course, bearing one hour of institutional credit, that would appear on the schedule. Tutors would be required to sign up for the course and be governed by course requirements.

The Reality

Despite the best laid plans and schedules for tutor selection and training, often several tutors become unavailable due to scheduling and readjusted course loads. Then new tutors must be hired quickly. The late comers invariably will not get the same training (having missed the Tutor Training Workshop) and may also find it impossible to get the class schedule that works with the regularly scheduled meetings.

Attempted Solutions

In an effort to assure a better chance at a common time,

1. I have asked that tutors be given a **preferential time to register** so that a common time could be cleared during the pre-registration process. However, with tutors' availability changing even between semesters, such a plan, while appealing, does not bring about the hoped for effect.
2. The Assistant Director surveys tutors' schedules and presents several meeting times for consideration.

Learning and Re-learning . . .

Sharing information and tricks on how to do certain problems is generally considered tutoring; indeed, most people view such sharing as the sum total of tutoring. Since tutors likely come to the Learning Center with such an assumption, one of the first tasks is to expand their perspective. The second task is cultivating the skills needed for effective tutoring.

The Ideal of an expanded perspective of the tutoring task

Desirably, effective tutors come to their task with an above average knowledge base of the subject tutored. They take time to review their coursework materials (notebooks, handouts and texts) and are fresh with concepts and vocabulary as they assist their clients. Additionally, they possess and are able to model effective study habits, purposeful self-management (See back cover of handout for outline of our *Academic Success Seminar*), and a polished academic etiquette (See inside back cover for *Academic Etiquette Guidelines* developed by tutors). I am persuaded that clients of the Learning Center become successful students because tutors teach both an understanding of the academic culture and an academic discipline.

The Reality

Some tutors are diligent in preparing for tutor sessions, but such review is not a strong priority and often they teach on the wing, as it were. We must consistently encourage and remind that review and preparation are effective ways in which tutors can increase their expertise and facility with their subject.

Attempted Solutions at expanding perspectives and developing tutoring skills

1. Tutors are constantly reminded that they must consider themselves students first. If they do not exhibit the behaviors of successful students and of effective learners they undermine one of the important components of their job: to be a role model.
2. Tutors are required to view *The Tutor Training Guide* videos and work through a tutor manual (*The Master Tutor*). Often this training is accomplished by the tutor individually and reported to the Director.
3. Tutors are hired for a second term or become eligible for STAR Tutor designation only if they have watched the entire video series and have submitted viewing reports.
4. Tutors are expected to participate actively in discussions of *The Master Tutor*; this text is most often used during the scheduled weekly meetings during the Spring term.
5. *The Learning Center Tutor Guide* is the text for the Tutorial Training Program.

The Ideal of increasing their knowledge base

Tutors attend classes, and review course materials, and work through additional materials from professors in order to become more effectively conversant in their area of expertise. Moreover, they have **internal motivation** to accomplish these tasks.

The Reality

Ah, the Director of the Learning Center is such an idealist! She has learned that students will accomplish these tasks of re-learning and training only as they are rewarded with pay and accolades. To be sure some students, especially those whose career goal is teaching, will give themselves to the tasks outlined above; however, the majority do not view their tutoring "gig" as anything more than a college experience and must be given much greater incentives to do more than showing up for tutoring and sharing a few tricks to assure a client's passing a course.

Attempted Solutions at reviewing and increasing their disciplinary knowledge base

1. Tutors are encouraged to observe in the classes from which they serve clients. They are encouraged to attend at least one class session per week. Class attendance will

likely elicit questions by the professor and tutors should be comfortable enough to answer questions directed at them. Not only does such a "putting one the spot" force review, but also it presents the tutor with the opportunity to develop credibility with clients and the professor.

2. *Tutors receive pay for class visitation and preparation time needed to fine-tune understanding.*

Management . . .

The least favorite activity of tutors is the paper work that must necessarily accompany an effectively run and monitored learning environment. Additionally, management means evaluating the processes an organization uses in order to improve the manner in which business is conducted. Evaluation, one of those higher-level thinking skills, demands a greater expenditure of effort and implies a greater commitment than just showing up. Some tutors will actually be intrigued by the managerial aspects of the Learning Center's work especially if they are in business management; the majority, however, find such tasks as bothersome and time consuming. Thus, through "gentle" coercion, tutors are encouraged to come to terms with the management tasks of reporting and evaluating.

The Ideal

At any time, I should be able to go to client files and be able to see what is being tutored and what progress is being made. The files become instrumental in evaluating the impact the Learning Center is making on the retention of students and the improvement of GPA's.

The Reality

Too often, client files are not as complete as they need to be for an in-depth evaluation of tutoring practices and outcomes. Therefore, end-of-the-term summaries were developed to serve as the collecting tool for assessing the numbers served and to record grades earned. Until an electronic system is in place, the statistics that would give us the definitive answers evaluative research requires elude us. However, our faithful institutional research Director has been able to ascertain **that Bainbridge College retention rates have increased by five percent since the opening of the Learning Center**. While we cannot claim sole credit for this increase, we would like to believe that some of the retention has been as a result of students' passing classes they would otherwise have dropped or failed.

Attempted Solutions

1. Management practices and their diligent application have come to be tied to the earning of STAR Tutor designation and paychecks.
2. Management practices are clearly outlined in *The Learning Center Tutor Guide* and are frequently referred to in the tutor meetings.
3. Tutors are given opportunities to discuss established management practices and to offer recommendations for change.
4. Tutors must meet with the Director in the course of the first month of the term and present their clients' folders for review.
5. Before receiving their final paycheck, tutors must complete and submit several documents to the Director. These include "Client Evaluations", a "Summary Sheet" reporting the number of their clients and frequency of attendance, and either a "Returning Tutor Semester Interview" or an "Exit Interview" in which they measure

themselves against their projected goals from the beginning of the term as well as developing goals for the next term or for t[illegible] transfer institution.

Challenges of Training for Leadership

- Teaching the necessity of Accountability toward self, clients, professors, and the Center; (15-28) and,
- Teaching that tutoring is a job rather than a club or extra-curricular student activity (29-38).

Leaders Develop Accountability . . .

Developing accountability is a particularly challenging portion of the tutors' training.

The Ideal

Any program's continuity is dependent upon consistency, and therefore accountability. Accountability is the central issue in setting standards of performance and training because in the final analysis it is the gravity, the magnetic force of retention. If I aim to have a tutor corps that stays in place for more than one term, then I must maintain a program and a standard that will result in people who are successful.

The Reality

I remind myself that I am dealing with people who come with a wide range of maturity and life experience. Some are as young as sixteen years of age (PSO students from the local high school), others may be my age but with little experience in a working environment other than that of the home. I remind myself that accountability is affected not only by family background, but also by factors serious and fickle: as serious as childcare or transportation problems and as fickle as developing a penchant for politics and being in the middle of running for an SGA office or being under parental pressure to give up smoking, thus undergoing a painful and frustrating withdrawal from nicotine while struggling for independence. Keeping these circumstances in mind, I am however equally persuaded that a student/tutor's sense of belonging (in school or in a peer tutoring program) is not forged without the price of making difficult choices and taking up behaviors one may not as yet be ready to practice consistently.

Attempted Solutions

As I see it, tutors must learn to be accountable in several directions. Let's call it the cardinal directions of the compass rose of academic life. Keeping each of these directions of accountability in balance allows tutors to maintain an equilibrium and steady course as they make their way among the various roles they fulfill: student, employee, parent, spouse. The documents used to manage the Learning Center have evolved out of need to fulfill a function both as records-management for the Director and as accountability-management for the tutors. The accountability compass rose for the Learning Center includes the following ordinal directions:

- Self (15-18)
  Tutor Information Sheet, Appointment Logbook, Time Sheet
- Clients (19-23)

Tutor/Client Record Form, Tutoring Log, Standing Appointment Application, Semester Summary

- Center (24-26)
  Request for Tutoring Services, Client Sign-in
  Important Tutor and Learning Center Dates
- Professors (27-28)
  Classroom Visitation Sheets
  Professor/Tutor Interviews

Minding each of the directions of their lives will result not only in personal academic success but will also assure that they have the enthusiasm and energy to tackle the tasks of tutoring in the next semester. Moreover, accountability sets a standard that is noticeable to the clients of the Learning Center. When students see the standard by which their tutors conduct themselves, they will come to emulate that standard. The result is that the Learning Center comes to be seen as a place of energy and success; in short, it becomes an inviting place to be and to become a Master Student and an attractive program with which to identify as a future tutor.

Leaders Develop Professional Mindsets: Seeing Tutoring as a Job . . .

Because tutoring is a campus activity, tutors often view their work at the Learning Center as an extra-curricular activity similar to a club membership. As a consequence they may not view tutor meetings and tutoring appointments as binding. They may make doctor's appointments or commit to family or extra-curricular activities at the same time. They must still learn to plan well ahead of an absence and to alert their clients of changes in date and time. Seldom do they feel responsible to find a replacement so that the client will still be helped despite their own absence. Moreover, because tutors may not view their tutoring as a job, they will also not view it as a commitment of long standing much less a situation in which they will be evaluated and will be expected to set and achieve goals.

Every document in the previous pages is in one respect or another an effort to show tutors the importance of the work. Even if they do not view tutoring as a job that may lead to other opportunities for them, they must at least be taught to recognize the immense importance of their tutoring to their clients and to the College. Every tutor meeting or personal interaction with the director is intended to help tutors to view tutoring as a job.

Thus conversations and tutor meetings invariably include the ideas of

commitment,

willingness to be evaluated and seeing evaluation as an opportunity for professional growth, and

staying power.

Commitment *to professional tutorial behavior is emphasized beginning with the application process.*

- One of the ways that commitment is fostered is by giving tutors the opportunity to develop portions of the program. The Tutor Class of 1998-99 developed the Tutor Job description that follows:

"The task of the tutor is
to encourage clients to develop educational values, and experience academic culture
to strengthen clients' confidence,
to establish areas of difficulty and be open-minded about the clients' fears of a particular subject, and
to assist clients with setting and achieving their goals.

"Through relating with students, tutors encourage them to help themselves while providing a comfortable environment filled with praise and patience.

"A tutor's task also includes the following:
teaching various learning styles and problem solving strategies;
finding the most appropriate way for the client to improve;
encouraging clients to go beyond their perceived limitations;
recognizing and celebrating diversity;
developing educational values and going that extra mile when needed.

"Finally, tutors encourage and foster collaborative learning, and are role models of motivation, dedication, and continued personal learning."

- A second way is by stating what professional tutorial behavior in the Learning Center means and by outlining expectations clearly. The *Learning Center Tutor Manual* was designed to accomplish that very task. A section called "Office Basics" outlines the following agenda:

LEARNING CENTER Administrative ESSENTIALS:

1. Record Keeping is essential
2. Evaluation is essential

TUTOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

Tutors must:

- Make appointments for Learning Center only. If a tutor has a Saturday appointment it is to be held in the PLATO lab in Tech studies or in the Library.
- present a work schedule at the beginning of each semester. (Once that schedule has been submitted, the Director will expect that the tutor will work those hours. The working schedule should include a careful consideration of work and study obligations.) ;
- call in as soon as possible if ill;
- report to work on time;
- keep up with student folders and provide sufficient written record of what has transpired during a particular session;
- use skills learned during the training and keep in mind the various learning styles, study habits and personal concerns that the client might be bringing to a tutoring session.
- expect the student to do his/her own work while assisting, encouraging, and finally, commenting on the student's efforts and progress.

SCHEDULING:

Schedules may be adjusted during the first week of classes. Thereafter, tutors submit the adjusted and permanent schedule to the Director. After the first week of classes, changes made in a tutor's schedule must be approved by the Director.

Tutors should BE AVAILABLE during their designated tutoring hours. They should either be available in the Learning Center or elsewhere on campus. Until a tutor is through with the PLATO review and other training materials, he/she should be working in the Learning Center.

APPOINTMENT LOGBOOK:

Tutors should check their logbook schedules regularly. Even if the evening before a tutor did not have an appointment, he/she may have gotten one early the next morning. So, a tutor is wise to check the book especially when scheduled for hours.

CLIENT SIGN-IN is important!!! Ask clients to sign in and to do so by printing.

SESSION PROCEDURES: Tutors should

1. be aware that they have a session by checking their schedule daily;
2. be punctual (that means early enough to check in, go over the client's record and find out what's up at the Learning Center.);
3. know the client's name and make sure the client knows tutor's name; and
4. review records of past visit(s) to determine what needs to be reviewed before going into new material.

STUDENT FOLDERS:

Each standing-appointment client is to have a folder in which tutors will keep the records for client sessions and the initial interview form.

Before the first session invite the students to take the LASSI Inventory and explain that the inventory will give both the student and the tutors a better notion of what matters need to be taken into consideration for their study habits and attitudes.

After each session, be sure to note the activities of the session and the follow-up that is necessary with that client.

Please make sure to return the folders to the collection bin for refiling.

PROFESSIONALISM:

Tutors maintain a professional attitude in dealing with their clients. Yes, they may be friendly and funny, but they keep in mind that the client is coming for assistance in learning and sometimes even for other advice. They are often quite anxious and confused and need to be able to see the tutor as a reputable resource. In a similar vein, once a student is identified as a tutor on the campus and in his/her own classes, he/she presents a picture of the type of persons who become leaders on the Bainbridge College campus. Consider the role of tutor an important one. While in the Learning Center, tutors are expected to be mindful of other tutors and if they are not tutoring and want to visit, they may do so in the Student Center Lobby.

Keep in mind, too, that Bainbridge College has a sexual harassment policy (applied to both sexes) that legally requires appropriate behavior (including gestures and language.)

TIME OFF POLICY:

Tutors are allowed three times when they may ask off. These times should not occur during finals or midterm times. The time requested off must be prior to appointments having been made. Tutors are also granted two emergency leaves. If appointments are scheduled, then time-off is considered an emergency. Any emergency beyond two should make one question one's desire to work as a tutor. Student-clients rely on tutors as anyone would rely on a professional from whom one seeks help. It is an unfair burden to ask other tutors to absorb extra hours and appointments. Often, if only one tutor is available for a subject, the clients simply go away disappointed. FINALLY, school responsibilities should not interfere with your responsibilities as a tutor, so adjust your schedule accordingly.

PAY: Record the pay dates and the dates on which time sheets are due. Tutors will have no other reminder than the tutor timeline posted at the beginning of each term. A general reminder is posted on the Friday of the pay period so that tutors can remember to turn in their sheets IN INK. Time sheet must be signed by the Director and the tutor to be valid for pay. The time to turn in the sheet is by Friday NOON.

Willingness to be evaluated and seeing evaluation as an opportunity for professional growth must be one of the qualities of tutors.

Evaluation is an aspect of tutoring that makes tutors quite uncomfortable. However, if they are to grow in professionalism and leadership, they must learn to undergo such rigors; in fact, they must learn to welcome evaluations as opportunities to improve their performance.

In order to make the evaluation less threatening, tutors have been asked to participate in the process of creating the evaluation documents. Since recent tutors come into a tradition already formed, they are asked to study the documents, are asked what they think they mean and are invited to challenge the underlying values and ideas or the evaluation scales. This invitation includes all of the evaluation documents used in the Learning Center, especially that with which they evaluate their director. Being able to evaluate others even those whom they may hold in esteem is a part of becoming a leader.

- Evaluation of their own performance, the management of the Center, their clients' performance, and their Director's performance is the main topic of several tutor meetings each term.

  OWN PERFORMANCE: During the semester, the Director will observe one of each tutor's sessions. After the observation, tutor and Director will talk about the observation and air concerns that may have arisen. The observation is to assist tutors in learning to become more effective. It is not meant to make tutors uncomfortable or to make them feel criticized. Tutors may invite the Director to observe a particular session with a client in order to give pointers on overcoming something that bothers the tutor or the client. At any rate, tutors are given prior notice about an observation.

  MANAGEMENT OF THE CENTER: The Tutor Class of 1999-00 reviewed and reworked the "Tutor Routines and Strategies" section of the *Handbook* and clarified the categories and evaluation ranges on the "Tutor Observation Form". Management evaluation is ongoing as each meeting will bring up concerns about our operations that must be modified to meet the needs of a specific tutor configuration. Also, depending on tutor class schedules, adjustments must be made in the manner in which we deliver our services. So, each term offers leadership challenges in meeting management needs and client needs.

  CLIENTS' PERFORMANCE: Tutors evaluate their clients during interview times with their director or when a client's needs make it necessary to meet with her at unscheduled times. Attendance is charted by the Center and the tutors and is considered an indicator of success. The Center posts the number of times a tutor is "stood up" for an appointment. Conversely, when a client excels in an assignment or does well on an exam, their success is charted on the BRAG BOARD. Another opportunity for client evaluation is a Mid-term evaluation administered by tutors. The evaluation serves to assist clients in assessing their progress, but also makes it possible for tutors to evaluate a client's performance,

comment on it, and make adjustments. Such evaluation tests their leadership severely as they must speak with peers quite honestly and at times assume a assertive role not comfortable for them. Finally, tutors have the opportunity to name a Master Student at the end of the term and honor that student during a reception with a certificate. They take pride both in the accomplishments of their client and in their abilities as a role model and tutor.

DIRECTOR'S PERFORMANCE: This assessment is not a matter of difficulty for the tutors as it is similar to evaluating their professors. However, once the tutors come to know their director well, they must learn to step back from emotional attachments in order to make an effective assessment.

- The documents following are used in the various evaluations administered in the Learning Center. Tutor evaluations occur each semester, while Learning Center and Director evaluations occur only in the fall term.

staying power . . . *the personal assurance that one can be counted upon for at least one term is encouraged*

Retention is central in developing a tutor corps and program continuity. Retention is affected by numerous factors. Recalling the diverse nature of the commuter student population will bring to mind the most obvious reasons: the necessity of a better paying job with more consistent hours than tutoring can assure; changes in financial status; changes in carpooling patterns and child-care support; changes in spousal, parental, or employer support of a student's academic goals; changes of programs of study such as a student entering a certificate program that requires all-day participation, i.e. LPN program; changes in course load that demands greater expenditure of personal study time; increased involvement in other areas of college life, i.e. Student Government.

The Ideal

Tutors are full-time students who have only one or two other commitments. Tutors are able to commit to the Learning Center for several semesters thus reducing the expense of time and money in training more tutors.

The Reality

RARELY are we able to hire a tutor who does not already have a part-time job and family commitments that make demands on his/her time and energy. Only two percent of the tutors hired over the past three years continue for more than two semesters. The majority of the tutors have one-semester "gigs." A CAREER tutor, one who returns for several semesters in succession, is the hope of the Directors; the return of three or four tutors at the beginning of the next term constitutes an answered prayer and may even require the making of a *promesa*. As the program has gathered reputation and acceptance among the students, an increase in CAREER tutors has occurred. In the 99-00 academic years more than half the tutors returned for a subsequent semester. Those who have left the Center have done so because they have graduated or transferred. Thus the mentoring schedule could be considered successful. Moreover, the hiring procedure appears to be more effective than at the outset of our program. The fact that STAR tutors participate in the interviews may make the new

tutors feel much more accountable to their peers. They already sense during the interview that they work less for one individual, that is the director, than as one of a team – a team they would think twice about letting down.

Attempted Solutions

1. Increase in tutor pay for each consecutive semester a tutor serves in the Learning Center.
2. Diversify opportunities for Learning Center activities and responsibilities.
3. Practice intrusive intervention to underscore the Director's commitment to a tutor's personal and academic success so that changes in personal life do not undermine continued forward movement in an academic career.
4. Mentor to assure balance between work and other commitments thus preventing a tutor's academic failure or tutor burn-out.

III.
Leaders Develop by Creating Expectations

The Learning Center, centrally located on the campus and in the Student Center, would receive adequate utilization without the staff and tutors doing advertising. However, one of the central features of the Center is that it is a *peer tutorial* center. Those peer tutors need to introduce themselves and through those introductions create a heightened awareness of the Learning Center as well as to develop campus-wide expectations that students will then want to have fulfilled.

Campus Involvement

Creating Expectations on the Campus

- Photo introductions on the Learning Center Bulletin Board heighten the expectations of students who will want to come in and make an appointment. **Moreover, tutors learn that a part of leadership is being recognized on the campus.** The photos on the bulleting board give them face recognition which often leads to a student approaching a tutor to ask for help. Because the Learning Center bulletin board faces the hall used by most of the students entering the Student Center, the tutors get a lot of exposure.

- Classroom Introductions by the tutors are another component of leadership training and are the second phase of heightening campus expectations. **When they must stand in front of a group of students who do not know them, they must face their fears and at the same time sell an important program provided by the college. Doing this, gives the tutors an enormous boost of self-confidence and the realization that they are participants in a life-changing enterprise: they are a part of the educational endeavor that leads the students to success.**

    1. Tutors determine which classes to visit on the first day of classes in order to advertise Learning Center services.
    2. Tutors visit first the classes in their area of expertise; in the remaining time they visit other classes to talk about the Learning Center and encourage

students to come. All classes are visited no later than the first week of the term. Those classes that cannot be visited by a tutor are still sent a communication. Professors are encouraged to hand out Learning Center information packets and to talk about the Learning Center services. The packets include a brochure about the Center and a notebook card that offers study tips and academic etiquette.

The presentation to the classes are expected to be polished and are usually practiced during the tutor training meeting with one of the MENTOR-Tutors in charge.

These presentations include the following information:

- Learning Center's purpose and location: Here are some thoughts tutors have had about what the Learning Center is:
  An oasis for learning, a friendly and welcoming place, a place where students feel as though they belong, a place that is supportive and encouraging, a place for FREE help, a place staffed by trained peer tutors.
- Hours of operations
- Introduction of yourself
- If you are a returning tutor tell a success story
- Benefits of getting tutoring early
- Other services offered by the Center

3. Study groups are encouraged to form and meet at the beginning of the semester. Study groups have reserved tables and may have a tutor as a study leader.
4. Tutors hand out business cards on which appears the following information:
   - Learning Center Room 308 Bainbridge College Student Center
   - Tutor's name and times of availability
   - A catchy quote or saying that will be attention-getting.

Stauf's (usually welcome) cookies will be awarded to tutors creating the three most ingenious, eye-catching business cards. (Winning examples in the appendix)

Creating Expectations in Faculty and Staff

- Professor meetings (see form in Section II page 28)

  Tutors contact professors and arrange professor meetings using the following steps:

  1. Meet the professors teaching in tutor's discipline
  2. Make arrangements to meet with professors and the Learning Center Director.
  3. Indicate that the meeting will take about one hour.
  4. Agenda items will include: tutor and professor expectations, tutoring assistance that is considered helpful, and generally get to know the professor better and assure the professor that the Center, and specifically the tutor, is a help to the professors in meeting their students' needs.
  5. ***Professor meetings must be accomplished by the end of the third week.***

- **Professorial interaction is yet another building block in the tutor's leadership development. Having to interact with professors as a para-professional encourages tutors to assume greater responsibility for their own learning and skill development. Moreover, while they truly are peer tutors, professorial interaction helps them to develop an ethos of academic inclusiveness which raises the bar on their personal performance and role modeling.**

- Professor quotes and photos and Staff introductions on the Learning Center bulletin board generate student interest regarding Learning Center activities. At the same time, tutors have the opportunity to become better acquainted with professors and the college staff.

- The *Fatlighter Express* gives a tutor with a penchant for desktop publishing, an opportunity to put a four-page flyer together. This is not a regular publication as it depends on tutor availability, but when produced it features faculty, programs, and administrative offices as well as academic topics and important dates.

Tutor Involvement

Creating Expectations in Tutors for ...

Accolades

Closely connected with earlier concepts regarding accountability and viewing tutoring as a job not as a campus activity, is the Learning Center Director's award program. I believe leaders are molded through expectations, workable routines, achievable goals, and finally rewards. The best practices of industry show that those who are praised appropriately will continue performing well above the average and certainly above the level they believed themselves to achieve. The tutors who have participated in the last four years of the program all have performed at levels greater than they believed themselves capable. I mention this because it is a central feature of my interaction with tutors. Not every tutor I hire is able to see what he/she is capable of. I must see this for them, and the program I have structured brings the best out in them. Once any nuance of success emerges, I am quick to recognize and applaud the effort.

♦ STAR Tutor Award Criteria:

Goes to the tutor who has contributed significantly to the Learning Center's program during a two-week period. Three or four tutors may be selected for this award each term.

The criterion is basically a subjective one, but the Director does look for certain qualities that set a particular tutor apart from others. The designation is meant to praise as well as to reward effort that goes beyond the baseline task of tutoring. That is not to say that those who only tutor will not be eligible for selection.

Some qualities that enter into the selection of a STAR Tutor are as follows:

- Has made this place as though it were his/her own place.
- Takes personal initiative and doesn't have to be told what to do.
- Can find things or thinks of things that need doing to improve the services of the Learning Center.
- Shows outstanding achievement with a client.

- Effective in managing various responsibilities
- Assumes more than one responsibility in the Learning Center.

STAR Tutor Rewards and recognition include the following:

- Wears a badge for two weeks that designates the tutor as a STAR tutor;
- Conducts one of the upcoming meetings;
- Eats lunch with Dr. Stauf;
- Serves on the interview and selection committee for new tutors;
- Serves as mentor for new tutors; AND
- Helps with Tutor party planning.

♦ Learning Center Tutor Award

Goes to the tutor who has grown the most in professionalism, in tutoring skills, and has been instrumental in the development of materials used by the learning Center for tutoring or individual paced instruction. Has been consistent in meeting the tasks required of tutors such as record keeping, interacting with professors, doing outreach with classes, and keeping current with their subject of expertise.

♦ Learning Center Achievement Award

Goes to the tutor who in addition to the expectations placed on all tutors has contributed most to the tone of what the Learning Center is: one of positive energy and the expectations of all students being successful in their efforts. The tutor also has made significant contributions by way of being available for extra hours and in outreach to students across the campus. Additionally the tutor has made recommendations to the operations of the program to increase its success and effectiveness campus wide.

In the same spirit of using praise as a means to foster even greater accomplishments, I ask tutors to recognize the efforts of their clients by being generous, BUT GENUINE, with their praise of client efforts. The BRAG board is a public forum for praise. Finally, at the end of the term, tutors award THE MASTER STUDENT designation to one of their clients. This evaluation and award is yet another aspect of leadership development.

♦ Master Students are selected by tutors once per semester. This program gives clients who are not ordinarily recognized for academic achievement a moment in the spotlight. Each tutor nominates the client who most exemplifies the attitude of a master student. Such nominations give tutors the opportunity to assess and evaluate as well as make a presentation. The presentations occur during the last tutor meeting of the term. Sometimes a client's professor may be on hand to witness the award, sometimes the Dean of Students or the Vice President of Academic Affairs is invited. Regardless of who is in attendance, the tutors are asked to present their client to the group, explain what makes that client a master student and then present the certificate. Copies of the certificates and photos are posted on the Learning Center Bulletin board for the student body to see.

Added Involvement Fosters Leadership and

. . . adds to added pay and greater Learning Center visibility

For some tutors, added involvement in the Learning Center is an economic necessity. However, most of the time those tutors who are motivated toward greater levels of responsibility and ownership in the enterprise will assume other tasks for which they often decline being paid. Of course, one of the qualities of leadership is doing more than one's share and inventing ways in which to make a distinct difference in a program. Below are a number of tasks (quoted from the Tutor Handbook) central to the program that are accomplished by tutors who volunteer to do them.

CLOSING MONITOR:

Please observe the following steps when closing the Learning Center:

- turn off all computer monitors and hard drives;

DO NOT TURN OFF THE SERVER OR ITS MONITOR!!!!

- put chairs into their place either in front of each monitor or at their respective tables;
- clear tables of remaining pencils, papers, etc. Clean and put away hand-held marker boards;
- erase large marker board; and,
- double-check all three doors and turn off lights.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT:

The tutor designated as the records files manager files the records from the previous day.

Once per week the Records Manager will check that all students who signed in that week have a folder, a registration card and a client worksheet.

LIBRARIAN:

The tutor accepting the Librarian designation will go through files and texts to assure that they are being used to their fullest potential. The Librarian may do this for up to two hours per week and give the Director ideas on learning files management.

BULLETIN BOARD MONITOR:

Once per week the materials on the bulletin board both inside and outside are reviewed and changed if needed. This task will be accomplished every Friday afternoon.

OTHER TUTOR DESIGNATIONS:

Tutors wishing to get involved in other than one-to-one tutoring can also function as GROUP STUDY LEADER, MOTIVATIONAL LEADERS, AND STUDY SKILLS SPECIALISTS, and LIST SERVE SPIES, TUTOR-MENTORS. FATLIGHTER EDITOR. These various positions all require extra training. Tutors may let the Director know if they are interested in any of these so that the extra training sessions can be arranged.

IV.
Creating Leaders through Mentoring and Traditions

Traditions . . .

Belonging and Unity – Esprit de Corps – is essential to a program that hopes to perpetuate itself term after term despite a more then fifty percent turn-over in staff. The most effective way to build an esprit de corps is through mentoring. The director is the central energy in this task, but MENTOR-TUTORS can contribute significantly. Some of the traditions that have evolved are as follows. Each was an idea that the director tried and if it seemed to fulfill a need, it remained to become a tradition. A significant truth that has emerged through the development of this Learning Center Tutor Leadership

program is that any idea takes at least three terms to catch on and become a part of the ethos and traditions of a place. So for a while, the director must believe in her idea and implement it to whatever degree is successful at the time. Of course, sometimes, even after something has become a tradition, because of staffing changes, the director may once again have to assume responsibility for the activity until another person for whom this is a rewarding task comes along.

- Tutor Brags are aired at each tutor meeting.
- Brags about client accomplishments are posted as they occur.
- Tutor Suppers once per year at the Director's house. Tutors only.
- Tutor Party !!!! Once per year at the end of spring term to which **faculty and families are invited.** The tradition is that we gather as a group with everyone bringing something for the fun and food. At times the tutors take full responsibility for the party and the director only has to bring the meat for the grilling. At other times, the director has to be the host. Some picnics have been complemented by games cheerfully played by attending faculty, at other times the gather is a time to share a meal and everyone departs after clean-up. Sometimes tutors hang around afterwards and want some "quality time" with their director, other times everyone disappears and the director get to take a walk around the lake by herself. Whatever the permutation, the picnic gives us a chance to mingle and to wind down from the stresses of the semester.
- Service Projects are conducted once per term. So far, the director must still find venues for the group to serve. Some projects have included park and river clean-ups in concert with the Keep America Beautiful campaigns, Relay for Life participation and Habitat for Humanity. Some tutors will go on their own to assist with a project which again underscores that Leadership is all about participating in one's community.
- Volleyball game held each summer with submarine sandwiches as a reward for good sportsmanship and letting the director's team win.
- The photo collage is prepared at the end of each academic year and displays for future years those tutors whose work has made the Learning Center the success it is.

Mentoring . . .

Creates a sense of significance and personal value. Each term, in addition to the training session and the weekly meetings, the director meets with the tutors individually. The form for these meetings are included in the section on accountability and evaluation. These meetings give the tutors a sense of personal involvement with the director, but also holds them much more individually accountable for their own success and that of their clients. The tutors are reminded that they are students first and as such must still make their studies their primary task. However, within reason, they learn to balance other responsibilities. The meetings assure the director that her staff is maintaining the necessary balance and pace to achieve the intended goals both for the center and the tutors.

Several meetings per term to accomplish a number of tasks central to student-leaders.

- *Goal setting* meeting and assuring all the record keeping is up to date. This meeting takes place within the first two weeks of the term.

- ❖ *Personal progress* semester meeting checks on tutors' *academic progress* during an informal session whith the director. A chat with the tutor helps to assess academic progress and looks for hurdles that might need some mentoring in being negotiated. This meeting is scheduled in conjunction with mid-term reviews that tutors are asked to conduct with their clients.
- ❖ *Observation* and assessment takes place the last third of the term. The observation is for one session which the tutor is allowed to choose. If time permits, the assessment meeting comes immediately after the observation. It is at that time that we discuss techniques for clarification and the Socratic method. Further, tutors are able to discuss particular problem clients with whom I should meet.
- ❖ Final *summary* meeting takes place the last week of the term and must be accomplished before tutors receive their last paycheck. Whether the tutor intends to return or is transferring or graduating, they are expected to review their term's work, make plans for the next semester or make long-term goals for continuing their education.
- ❖ *Sending-off* toward other programs or colleges is on last benefit that tutors receive provided their work has been commendable. Especially if the students go elsewhere within the Georgia University System, I contact my counterparts in other institutions to introduce my tutors and to recommend them. This sending off is one last handshake and fare-thee-well to assure that what they have experienced continues to bear fruit. Leaders aren't just grown for one spot in the world – true leaders take their portfolio of skills and do themselves proud wherever their paths lead them.

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Tutoring Class of 1998-1999 (*Danielle Barnard, Charlie Clinton, Pat Cunningham, Ebony Hutchins, Sarah Mitchell, Bert Murrah, Michele Pittman, Renae Riles, Lashae Robinson, Clare Scott, Shawn Stoyer, Tierra Strickland, and Kristi Thompson*). "Tutor Job Description"